AN

# ESSAY

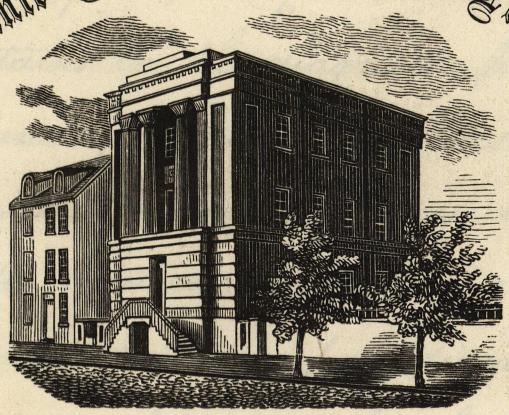
ON

*Surgery*

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY

*of the*

Homœopathic Medical College of Pennsylvania,



FOR

The Degree of Doctor of Medicine

BY

*Horace Homer*

*Philadelphia, January 31st 1863*

Surgery or Chirurgery is derived from two Greek words, meaning the hand, & labor. The word would seem to signify, that department of the healing art which appertains to the diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment of that class of diseases which require manual or instrumental treatment for their cure; and in contradis-tinction to the practice of medicine, which denotes depicting the treatment of disease by the administration of drugs or other substances supposed to have a sanative tendency.

Surgery divides tissues or parts that have become improperly united, and unites those which have been divided, when they should have remained in union; seperates whatever

* Does surgery do that

has become dangerous or inconvenient to the patient; removes foreign bodies, or parts of the body, which from disease or loss of vitality have become foreign whenever they exert a hurtful influence on the animal economy; restores to their cavity or replaces in their normal position portions of the body which have become displaced; checks the loss of blood from wounded or divided vessels; reduces dislocations, and inflamations, ~~and~~ or removes purulent (or phlegmonous) matter which may have been deposited by inflamations; repairs and corrects deformities and distortions; & effects the replacement of lost tissues.

Its means of accomplishing these results are the hand, lint, bandages, and apparatus of various kinds; cutting crushing and probing instruments, catheters, bougies, sounds, forceps, Specula, &c; and the

various forms of cauteries, direct and (in-
-direct.) liquid and solid.
The earliest surgeons of whom there is
any record were the Egyptian Priests.
Kenrick says that on the walls of the ruined
temples of Thebes, baso-relievos have been
found displaying surgical operations and
instruments not far different from
some in use in modern times.
According to Herodotus, we owe to them
the use of the mora, and the adap-
-tation of artificial limbs.
In Greece, surgery is as ancient as the
mythic period of its history. Chiron
the centaur, born in Thessaly, and
skilful in the application of soothing
herbs to wounds & bruises, is the
legendary father of Greek Surgery.

But Esculapius son of Apollo, said by some to have been the pupil of Chiron, won the highest fame in that early time for surgical skill.

Until the time of Hippocrates there were very few surgeons of note.

Hippocrates more than any of his predecessors advanced surgical treatment; he reduced dislocations, and adjusted fractures with some success, he made use of the Trephine; applied the forceps in accouchement, made incisions in the kidney for the removal of calculi; performed amputations; and operated for fistula-in-ano.

From the time of Hippocrates until that of Celsus there were no surgeons of whom there is any positive information.

Celsus was the greatest of the Roman Surgeons, and his observations on injuries of the head, on cataract, on the li-gation of wounded arteries*, hernia, lithotomy, fractures, dislocations, amputa-tions and carbuncle, are all fully ac-cordant with the present Allopathic knowledge on these subjects, at least in the principles laid down.

Our attention is next called to Galen, although he paid more attention to medicine than surgery, yet his observations on the luxation of the femur backward, and on the application of the trephine to the sternum in em-pyema, are of importance.

In the early period of Christianity Surgery languished, the early Christians op-posed dissection as strongly as the Pagans, and by attributing the power of

healing wounds to martyrs and their relics discouraged all efforts at improvement in the surgical science.

Surgery was first put upon a sound and scientific basis, that of careful dissection in the 16th century, and Ambrose Pare a French surgeon who had educated himself in anatomical Science, was the first of its great lights. To him we owe the revival and improvement of the practice of tying arteries after operations or in wounds, instead of cauterizing them with a hot iron or boiling oil. His treatise on gun-shot wounds, though the first ever written on that subject, is a work of great value.

The 18th Century, witnessed a great advance in the science alike resulting alike from the profound anatomical and physiological

attainments and the brilliant genius of the surgeons of that period.

In England Percival Pott, who discovered the form of caries of the vertebra known by his name; was the reformer of the abuses of the actual cautery, and the potential escharotics, and the most judicious writer of his time, on fractures, amputations, injuries of the head, & diseases of the Spine.

John & William Hunter, the former the greatest master of the principles of Surgery in the profession; Chesselden & Douglass both famous as lithotomists, and the Drs. Morton, are among the greatest names in the surgical profession.

In France flourished Lapeyronie, Petit, Ledran Garangeot, & Dessault. Among the celebrated Surgeons of other European countries, were

Molinelli, Morgagni, Scarpa, Bertrandi, & Moscati in Italy; Albinus, Deventer, and Camper in Holland; and Platner, Röderer, Callisen, Kambella, Theden, Richter, and Saml Hahneman, in Germany.

During the 18th century the ligature of aneurismal arteries of large size, the treatment of hernia and fistula in ano, the cure of fistula lachrymalis, and the skilful management of dangerous & difficult parturitions, were the most important branches of Surgery in which there was a material advance from the preceding century. The 19th Century has however done more for the improvement of this science than all the centuries that have preceded it.

The objects to which the attentions of the skilful surgeons of the present day

century have been directed, are to avoid as much as possible heroic operations, and to practice conservative surgery.

Owing to the introduction of anaesthetics, operations have been shorn of the terror with which they were surrounded. The following may be particularized as being among the improvements of the age in surgery; resection of the bones at the joints; the preservation of the periosteum, and the consequent development of new bone; partial amputations of the foot; amputations at the thigh and shoulder joints; ligature of the arteries within the trunk; resection and removal of portions or even the whole of the upper, and lower jaw; operations for cleft velum palati; the opening by longitudinal section of the air passages in order to avoid asphyxia;

The resection and extirpation of the uterus, of the ovaries, and of the lower portion of the rectum; The adoption of water dressings in the treatment of wounds; introduction of the lead and silver sutures; the adoption of the gum and papier-mâché splints in fractures; the processes for remedying disunited fractures; the improved treatment of ulcers and abscesses; the cure of the most formidable aneurisms by the ligature of the Carotid, Subclavian, Axillary, Brachial, and the external and internal Iliacs; the treatment of varicose veins; the successful reduction of hernia; the successful treatment of calculi; the diagnosis and treatment of tumors, whether fatty, encysted, vascular or malignant; the treatment of Hydrocele; the cure of Strabismus; the

restorative process by which the nose, lip, &c are reformed from the adjacent tissues, the cure of hare-lip; and the treatment of club-foot.

I have given as concise an account as possible of the advancement in the practice of surgery, from the time in which Hippocrates flourished until the present time; with the exception of the Homoeopathic method.

The fundamental principles of this method, are so entirely different from any theory or practice, that has ever been advocated in the medical or surgical world, that it has created the most violent opposition on the part of the Allopathic practitioners.

It will perhaps be expedient in an essay of this kind, the object of which, is princi-

pally to, show the advantages of the Homoeopathic practice; to mention the principles of this science.

The first is expressed in the words, Similia, similibus curantur; and the next is, Administer but one remedy at a time. These principles are easily understood; they were first made known by Saml. Hahnemann, &c&c, after having by repeated experiments proved the truth of his statement. The reason why only one remedy should be used at a time, is this, only one remedy is proved on the healthy at a time, therefore it is not known how much do other remedies would interfere with the action of the each other.

The value of Homoeopathy in Surgery, and the treatment of Surgical diseases,

is this; among the effects which (sometimes) follow surgical operations, are Erysipelas, Inflamation, Suppuration & the formation of abscesses. (Surgeons of the old school very frequently are obliged to postpone operations, on account of the prevelance of Erysypelas, to the great disadvantage of the patient.)
Now there are medicines used by the Homoeopathic Surgeons, which will produce in the healthy, conditions similar to those above mentioned, consequently they will cure them speedily.
There are many disease, which require operations in the allopathic practice; and which are merely palliative in their character, which will yield to the influence of medicines taken internally, in accordance with the Homoeopathic law of similitude.

The reason of this, is that external disease is but the manifestation of an internal cause, and the external part being removed, the system still laboring under the diseased condition, the external symptoms are likely to reappear. Now all that we know of disease is by its symptoms, and all that we know of the action of medicines are by the symptoms that they produce, therefore if we give in accordance with the law of similitude a remedy for a disease, it will cure it, and more a remedy given internally for an external disease, and the disease disappears, the internal disease cause is cured, therefore the disease cannot return. S.

It is therefore necessary for every Homoeopathick physicain aspiring to the honor of being a surgeon to have a thorough knowledge of the Materiá Medica; for as it is the "first and sole duty of every Physician and Surgeon to restore health to the sick in a mild, prompt, and durable manner, in removing and annihilating disease by the shortest, safest, and most certain means, upon principles that are at once plain and intelligible." and as it is by his knowledge of the that Materiá Medica that he will be enabled to do this, it is then only that he can merit the title of a genuine physicain, or a man skilled in the art of healing; And without this knowledge of the curative indications of each

individual remedy, he might perform surgical operations which would be both painful and dangerous; and at the same time unnecessary; and instead of being entitled to the honorable title of Surgeon; would, & rather be entitled to that of Knife man or butcher.

In a previous page I mentioned among the Surgeons of the 18th century, the name of Samuel Hahneman, ~~not on account of~~ who, although no operator, yet because he cured surgical diseases; that surgical operations could not cure, and cured them in a prompt mild and permanent manner; and as there has been no one since his time to equal him, he is fully entitled to be called the Greatest Surgeon the World has ever produced.

Various forms of cauterization direct and indirect;
liquid and solid.